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ABSTRACT

The experiences of a literature teacher in an inner-city high school in Houston (Texas) give a portrait of the urban classroom and the successes and failures of the everyday life of the urban teacher. The school, in a poor neighborhood, is unremarkable, unstimulating, and ill-equipped for serious learning. The students, who are almost entirely members of minority groups, find themselves in a microcosm of the promise and the failure of the American educational system. Some are in a magnet program for the academically gifted, but most are in regular classes that do not meet their needs. The teacher, who had experience as a civil rights worker and a teacher in New York City and Vermont, used his life experience to create an environment that encourages learning and creative thinking among his students. The stories of 10 of his students who manage academic achievement in spite of enormous personal problems illustrate the astonishing resilience of some adolescents and the importance of support and education. (SLD)

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